

risk his limbs or his neck; but if the game be once in sight, it is pretty sure to be hunted down, and the marauder securely captured.

In the performance of his various duties, the policeman, like the soldier, often sheds his blood and even surrenders his life—how often, let the records of crime and violence testify. Nor are these the sole perils he has to encounter. In the long piercing nights of winter, the east wind will sometimes stab him to the heart, and he will be found frozen to death at his post; or, where the fierce blast is not immediately fatal, it will seize upon his vitals, and, entailing consumption as a consequence, consign him to a lingering death.

The above picture of a policeman's duty does not appear to present any extraordinary attractions, and it might be thought that the post was more likely to go a-begging than to be coveted as an object of ambition. But the fact is that, exclusive of some exceptional cases, the ranks of the force are recruited, and that constantly, from a description of men really superior, when the class to which they belong is considered. What is the reason of this? what are the underlying temptations to a policeman's life, and why are so many continually endeavouring to crowd into it? The answer is that, in the first place, the emoluments, though humble—not more than twenty shillings a week—are regular and certain; in the next place, the post is honourable, yes, honourable; for to all who do and will to do what is honest and right, the policeman is everywhere a coadjutor and a personal friend; and of this fact, though it was a long time distinctly asserting itself, the respectable portion of the public are now most fully cognizant; and, in truth, the estimation in which the police is held is no bad test of the respectability of a district. Herein lies the grand difference, with regard to this matter, between the English and the continental publics. Abroad, the members of the police are, it may be asserted, universally political spies, paid for espionage rather than for municipal service, and, as an inevitable consequence, they are regarded as the natural enemies of populations ill-governed and oppressed. With us, on the contrary, the police have no such relation to the government, but are emphatically the servants as well as guardians of the public.

But the principal cause which renders the service popular is found in the wholesome organization of the police force system. Unlike the soldier in the army, the soldier of the force is not exiled from home and friends, but can marry and settle comfortably in his native land. But, more than that, if he have merit, he may reckon on rising in his position. Promotion in the police is therefore no rarity, and some remarkable cases might be cited as examples. We knew an instance where a policeman, by the ready use of the lancet, saved the life of an apoplectic gentleman, who had fallen down in a fit: the operator in this case had been a surgeon, driven into the force by adverse circumstances. Not many years ago, another case was reported in the papers, in which a policeman acted as interpreter to an oriental vagabond brought before the magistrates, and whose language no one else in the court could understand. Another record tells us that a policeman, at the

imminent peril of his own life, dragged a sleeping traveller from his bed while it was enveloped in flames. Whole columns of such instances as these might be cited if need were, all tending to show that in the ranks of the police force are to be found, scattered here and there, talents, capacities, and moral qualities of no mean order. The exercise of such talents and qualities in the hour of need leads, as it should do, to promotion, and thus a wholesome spirit of emulation is maintained among the members, by which the public is better served.

The policeman at home, and in the bosom of his family, presents a picture differing materially from the domestic interiors of other men in a corresponding grade of life. The chances are—thanks to the overbuilding mania which has so plentifully spotted the bye-ways and suburbs of London with houses “to let”—that you find him and his little ones located in a residence worth from fifty to a hundred a year, of which he holds a single floor on the tenure of showing the rooms and recommending the house to a tenant. Thus the infant experiences of a policeman's child are of a somewhat anomalous kind; and it were a curious psychological question to inquire what are the result of these experiences—of his adventurous explorations of the empty rooms and unshuttered garrets—of his dreams from windy noises and the squeaking of supperless rats and mice, and the thousand and one utterances of the vast void mansion—upon his mental constitution.

And now we bid good-bye to Policeman A, thankful if we have shown that he and his class are entitled to the reader's kindly consideration.

STATE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

A FEW weeks since, a most valuable report on the sanitary condition of the city of London was presented to the commissioners by Dr. Letheby, the medical officer. This document is deserving of attentive study far beyond the district to which it more especially relates, since it describes facts of the deepest interest to all persons anxious to promote the health and happiness of the neighbourhoods in which they may happen to dwell. Owing to the wise arrangements which have been adopted for the last few years in the heart of the metropolis, the number of deaths has been gradually diminished; and it is a satisfaction to know that wherever similar sanitary measures are zealously and perseveringly employed, corresponding results will follow. With these few remarks, the following statements are commended to the earnest and thoughtful attention of our readers.

Out of the city population of nearly 130,000, there died in the course of the year 2904 persons. This is at the rate of 22·3 per 1000 of the inhabitants, or one death among every 45 of the living. With one exception, this is the smallest proportion of deaths upon record. It is just 9 per cent. less than the general average, and it represents a saving of 286 lives in the course of the year. No doubt can be raised as to the cause of this; for on looking back over the death-roll of the city for the last nine years, the time during which your sanitary measures have been in operation, there will be seen a

people look upon policeman Æ as their natural enemy, and it is a difficult part he has to play with them—for he has at once to respect their privileges and control their propensities. The law assigns them the privilege of the gutter, and it is their propensity to encroach on the dry pavement. No wonder that they are a little rebellious against his authority at times—though in truth it may be said, that they are boldest when his back is turned, and invariably shrink back into the damp berth assigned them when he is seen coming round the corner.

Another portion of the beat is a quiet *cul-de-sac* of genteel dwellings, inhabited by genteel people. Such spots as this are a veritable Tom Tiddler's ground to the whole of that class of street professionals who live by their accomplishments, whatever these may be. Travelling musicians, barrel grinders, Punch and Judy men, tumblers, conjurors, jugglers and acrobats, corps of negromelodists, dog dancers and melancholy ditty-singing vocalists—all and each of them imagine that they have a private property in such secluded resorts, and would fain be there "picking up gold and silver" all the day through. But there are two sides to that bargain. Quiet people have not always a predilection for sing-song and hurdy-gurdies, and do not choose to be amused at all hours against their wills. Therefore it is that policeman Æ is invested with something like a sovereign discretion in this business, and may close the quiet street despotically to all those wandering professors whose services he may consider unacceptable to the inhabitants. From the first, he made it impenetrable to hurdy-gurdies, dancing dogs, and besmudged faces; and he takes care to limit the recreative performances which he sees fit to tolerate, to a reasonable amount. Further, at the suggestion of a resident, he will summarily close the arena against the whole tribe of public professionals, whose imaginary rights must succumb to his fiat.

Acting as the stranger's guide and directory, the policeman is his counsellor and protector as well. While the swell-mobsmen is stalking the unsophisticated countryman, and watching for the moment to bag his game, Æ is as dexterously stalking the thief; and it shall happen, and has happened a thousand times, that the moment of rapine is the moment of capture, of restoration, and of punishment. In seasons of mist and fog, this exploit is rarely practicable, and then it is that the stranger, and the citizen too, should take special care of his pockets, for our friend has at these times a variety of duties on his hands; he has, for instance, to signal the drivers of vehicles at the corner, to prevent stoppages in the route, to show the lost and bewildered the way they have to go, and to keep an eye on open shops and stall-boards, where the opportunity that makes a thief is too incantiously presented.

Let us change the scene now, and look at Policeman Æ on night duty, for of that too he must take his share.

It is a gloomy, drizzling night in winter, between nine and ten. Tramp, tramp, comes the single file of night-watchers, with the inspector at their head, and as Æ drops from the rank, he wraps the dripping oil-skin round his shoulders and relapses

into the plodding step peculiar to his habits of unobvious vigilance. There are no echoes to his foot-fall; now and then, as he passes beneath the lamps, the glistening light is reflected in his moist drapery for an instant, and again he vanishes in the darkness. He is armed against violence, in case arms should be necessary, and he can flash a dazzling blaze from his invisible lantern upon any spot and at any instant if he chooses; but in fact he is the most undemonstrative of individuals just now, and as he plods along the quiet street is content to elude all observation. But see, that area gate flies open, and, spite of the drizzle, out pops the housemaid and trips after him over the wet stones.

"Missis is ill," says the maid, "very bad indeed, and the doctor says if she ain't kept quiet she will die. Master says, if you please will you keep the street as still as you can in the night, and prevent no disturbance."

"I will bear it in mind, you may depend," is the reply; "tell your master so—and good night."

The girl disappears and Policeman walks on; and if during the night a dog should commence howling, he will pelt him away; or if a band of drunken brawlers should wander into the district, he will disperse them as summarily as possible, and in all things do his best to secure quietness for the sick lady. This is not always an easy task, for in London the taverns and beer-houses discharge thousands of tipsy votaries towards midnight, and the rest of the weary and the invalid is constantly broken by yells and uproar, and words of obscenity and blasphemy, bellowed through the tranquil night, banishing slumber from the eyelids, and often, there can be no doubt of it, wofully aggravating the effects of disease.

As night draws on, and the roar of the city subsides into a hum, Policeman finds himself left in comparative solitude. One after another, the lights disappear in the upper rooms, and he now begins feeling at the doors and gates, and if any are not secure, he will rouse the inmates to make them so. Perhaps during this investigation he stumbles upon some houseless vagabond, curled up in some corner or on some door-step, seeking oblivion of his woe in sleep. Him he rouses at once, and directs to the nearest refuge for the destitute, where at least he may find shelter and a straw bed. Or, perhaps, he stumbles upon a senseless drunkard, weltering in the kennel and dumb to all inquiries. For him he must summon a comrade, by whose help, and the means of a stretcher, the disgusting object must be carried to the station and the cell, to await such retribution as the law inflicts. Or, instead of such an object, he may have to encounter a ruffianly drunkard, who, incapable of taking care of himself, resists all interference and fights with desperate fury against it.

To such agreeable contingencies as these, Policeman Æ is liable all night long; or, worse still, there may be an alarm of robbery and violence in the act of perpetration on his beat. In this case he is all alive; off goes the cloak or cape, out comes his weapon, forth flashes his bull's eye, and, summoning his nearest comrades with his rattle, the hunt of the burglars begins. It may lead over a steeple-chase of garden walls, or along the roofs of the neighbouring houses, where he has to

gradual falling off in the proportion of deaths, until from a yearly mortality of 3763 it has been reduced to 2904. This is a great result, and it will appear still greater when you notice that it has been chiefly effected in one district, namely the central. Here the improvement has been to the extent of 13 per cent. above the general average, and in some places it has reached to 38 per cent. In the western division of the city it has not been greater than 7, and in the eastern 3 per cent.

"This tells us that there are some places where the mortality is yet high—where, in fact, the cloud of death is always hanging, where the vitality of the people is slowly sapped, and where disease makes easy conquest. It is not enough that these places are the continual haunts of such endemic maladies as phthisis, fever, and the other putrid class, but they become the seats of stronger pestilence. There it is that the powers of sanitary science must be zealously applied, for it is there the very dirt ferments and the air becomes envenomed; and yet it is still a question how these powers are to be applied, for most of the denizens of these plague-nests have no more instinct for self-improvement than the unreasoning brute. If to-day you give them the appliances for cleanliness and ordinary decency, to-morrow you will find they have abused them; and nothing can be more disheartening than the ill-success of all your efforts to improve the character of these dismal dens. And yet these efforts must still be used, and perseveringly; for, bad as is the physical state of these places, their moral state is worse, and children grow up to perpetuate the vices which ignorance has made them love. That which is wanted, therefore, is some means of touching the root of these evils—of teaching the poor how to value the comforts of a decent, cleanly home—of educating them in a proper spirit of independence, and of making them know how great is their power of helping themselves. When this is done, the labours of sanitary science will be comparatively easy, for then the filthy habits, the wretched squalor, and the still worse moral vileness will quickly disappear. It does not fall within my province to discuss the means of education whereby this may be accomplished; but I cannot help saying that there seems to me to be an easy mode of doing it. Raise up but a few houses that are well adapted for the necessities of the poor, and you will soon find that they are a strong incentive to the forming of better habits and to the seeking for better homes. The spirit of improvement which has led to the destruction of the poor man's haunts has had but little regard to the poor man's wants; and, after all, the majesty of a great city may be but the glittering diadem upon the front of death.

"And now let us see what has been the influence of age on the city mortality, and what the proportion of deaths at each of the several epochs of life. You will notice in the second table that, of the 2904 deaths for the year, 1163 occurred among infants of less than five years of age, 193 between the ages of 5 and 20, 391 between 20 and 40, 522 between 40 and 60, 549 between 60 and 80, and only 86 after the fifth epoch of life. Of 1000 persons, therefore, who died last year in the city, 400 did not reach the 5th year of their age;

466 died before reaching the 20th year; 601 before the third epoch; 781 before the fourth; 970 before the fifth; and only 30 were left to struggle on to the sixth epoch. As in the vision of Mirza, therefore, we may see the bridge of human life, with its hundred arches, that spans the city. We can also see multitudes of people struggling to pass over it; and as we look more attentively we may see the passengers dropping through the traps and pitfalls of the bridge into the great tide that flows beneath. But faster than the dream of Mirza is the falling through of the crowd that struggles to pass over; for thicker and closer are the hidden traps and pitfalls that beset the way. Of the thousands who emerge from the dark cloud that hangs about the bridge's entrance, only one or two will reach to the hundredth arch; more than a third of them will have dropped through before they have traversed the twentieth part of the way; more than half before they have got to the crown of the thirtieth arch; and by the time the remnant of the crowd has reached to the middle of the bridge, there will be but three-tenths of all the number tottering on. In the fourth table of the Appendix I have endeavoured to represent these facts more clearly than I can describe. There you will see that the mortality of young children is as high as 435 per 1000 of all the deaths, or 93 per 1000 of the living. In the West London Union it is 363 per 1000 of the deaths, or 101 per thousand of the living; and in the City Union it is 327 per 1000 of the deaths, or 84·5 of the living. In all England, it is 398 per 1000 of the deaths, or 73·6 per 1000 of the living; and in France it is just 80 per 1000 of the living. In all England it is 398 per 1000 of the deaths, or 73·6 per 1000 of the living. Except from 10 to 35 years of age, the proportion of deaths in the city is much larger than in the rest of England. Between those ages the advantages are greatly in favour of a city life.

"As to the influence of occupation on the mortality, butchers, poulterers, and fishmongers, shopkeepers and merchants, have died at the rate of only from 15 to 16 in the 1000, while tailors and weavers, shoemakers, printers, and compositors, have succumbed at the rate of from 20 to 23 per 1000; wine-merchants, publicans, and waiters, porters and messengers, at the rate of from 24 to 26 per 1000; blacksmiths and gasfitters, painters and glaziers, dyers, bargemen, and watermen, at from 28 to 30 in the 1000; cabmen, draymen, ostlers, carmen, and stable-keepers, at the rate of 31 in the 1000; clerks and needlewomen at from 34 to 35 in the 1000; and lastly, the harder-working classes of carpenters, masons, and labourers, at from 43 to 45 in the 1000. These figures may not be expressive of the exact influence of the occupations on the mortality of the several classes, because it is impossible to eliminate all sources of error; but they represent nearly enough the general fact that there is a great difference in the vitality of the several classes; for the well-fed butcher and the prosperous merchant die in far less proportion than do those who are more exposed to the rough usages of life; and then, again, there seems to be something about the close occupation of clerks and needlewomen that makes them especially susceptible of disease.

